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The Golden Spider (The Elemental Web Chronicles Book 1)



Synopsis

London papers scream of dirigible attacks, kraken swarms, and lung-clogging, sulfurous fogs. But a rash of gypsy murders barely rates mention. Lady Amanda is tired of having both her intelligence and her work dismissed. After blackmailing her way into medical school, she catches the eye of her anatomy professor from the moment she walks into his lecture hall. Is he interested in her? Or only her invention—a clockwork spider that can spin artificial nerves? Lord Thornton, a prominent neurobiologist, has been betrayed. Secret government technology has been stolen from his laboratory, and a foreign spy is attempting to perfect it via a grisly procedure—using gypsies as test subjects. The last thing he needs is the distraction of a beautiful—and brilliant—new student, even if her spider could heal a deteriorating personal injury. Until her device is stolen and used in the latest murder. Lord Thornton has no option but to bring her into his laboratory as well as the investigation where they must fight their growing, yet forbidden, attraction. Bodies accumulate and fragile bonds are tested as they race across London, trying to catch the spy before it's too late.

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Customer Reviews

THE GOLDEN SPIDER hits on all its cylinders - mystery, suspense, romance, and steampunk. (I only put mystery first because that's what I notice first. The story is a satisfying romance, too.) When real life intervened and I had to put the book down, I kept thinking about the characters. I'm looking forward to the next book in the series. I won't talk too much about the mystery for fear of blabbing a spoiler. The setting is well-imagined and detailed. I could easily visualize the world Amanda and Thornton move through. At first, I stumbled a bit with kraken in the Thames, then I remembered Asian Carp overwhelming the Mississippi. That said, many of the story's fantastical steampunk elements are grounded in science and are easy leaps for the imagination to take. It's a great read full of sass and derring-do! Give it a whirl.

A page-turning steampunk romance! Lots of emotional tension expertly balanced with a murder mystery plot line and biotechnology that sounds really authentic. Add to that a super smart heroine and a super arrogant hero and you have a thoroughly satisfying read! Went to the author's website and was thrilled to learn this is the first in a series. Will definitely be buying the next installment!

Loved this book! I'm a huge fan of steampunk and romance and found this book a great read! Lady Amanda is strong and smart without anachronistic sentiments or tendencies. Thornton is written with a certain dry British air to him that I just loved. The spark between them felt very real and was based on much more than surface attraction. I loved how necessary they each were to solving each other's problems, and also necessary to solving the main conflict in the book. They worked well together and the tension keeping them apart was believable. The steampunk parts of the book were also great! It created a world with a good mix of historical feel and steampunk technology without overly explaining everything. I loved how the fashion was also described so that it was also influenced by steampunk tendencies. The book felt a touch slow to start (though I was also extremely tired when I was trying to start the book and had many distractions from kids, so, that could have been the only issue) and the ending took a bit to wrap everything up (though again, was reading at work amid distractions and interruptions). But these are very minor issues, and also just a matter of personal taste/circumstance. I did have it figured out before the reveal, but that is usually how it ends up for me and did not detract from my enjoyment of the plot unfolding at all. The supporting characters in the book were also great and I'm looking forward to more books in the series (hopefully something with Mr. Black?). I received this book in exchange for my honest review. But, then I also bought the book because it is totally worth it!

Simply put, I loved this story. Gadgets, mystery, and romanceâ€¦ a perfect combination. Anne Renwick did a great job mixing all the different elements to come up with a page-turning plot, complex characters with great tension, and not too much science and technology to lose this non-sci/tech reader, but enough to keep me intrigued. Definitely looking forward to book two of The Elemental Web Chronicles.

I really loved this book! The medical mystery was so interesting, and the characters were great. I loved Amanda, trying to become a doctor in Victorian England. Thornton was a great hero, dark and brooding and funny sometimes, too. Steampunk fans will love all the cool gadgets, but it's a great romance, too. Can't wait to read the next book in the series!

... although there is a decent bit of it. This was a pleasant deviation from your typical bodice-ripper, in my opinion (and there was, indeed, actual ripping of bodices). It's set in steampunk Victorian England, and follows a young woman who refuses to quietly acquiesce to the current social expectations (a formula that is practically guaranteed to engross me in the story, I'll admit). There's a bit of the prerequisite smut and some pretty steamy scenes, but they happen later in the book and most story-telling is spent on the actual plot, and not just erotic rendezvous in increasingly stranger and stranger environs. Also, there is some jargon that the author (a PhD in biology) has thrown in that makes it enjoyable for someone who understands it (eg myself). However, once in a while I'd come across a reference to cellular reproduction or mention of neural pathways that didn't make biological sense (which was very confusing, considering the author), so be forewarned of possible inconsistencies. I think one of the things I liked most about the book, though, was that while there were undeniably very tawdry, R-rated scenes, they were framed by very sweet and touching scenes, and a plot that would have been engrossing all on its own. This isn't just a steamy romance novel; it is a captivating murder mystery in its own right. I very much enjoyed this book, and look forward to reading the next one!

This is the first novel written by this author? The synopsis was immediately intriguing. I happen to love science and technology, history and mystery, AND romance! I had some concern that there would be just too many awesome elements contained within one volume... No worries, darlings! This new author has some serious writing chops. She has a great deal of knowledge of the scientific, that was in evidence. The most impressive feat, however, was the fact that she did manage to blend all of these delicious "genres" into one story. The characters were delightful and

endearing. The details in the technology were SO very interesting. The alternate reality was just beautifully drawn. The mystery was very well-plotted with excellent pace. The romance was charming. I am a sucker for the charming! All told... I am a fan of this new author. I will be very much looking forward to the next installment in the Elemental Web Chronicles.

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